



# AB 6359 Town Center Parking Study Draft Review

Mercer Island City Council | October 17, 2023





# Agenda

- Project Overview
- Public Comment Process + Highlights
- Early Actions Update
- Draft Plan Review: Items for City Council Discussion/Approval
- Next Steps

# Project Timeline





# Town Center Parking Goals

1. Create a parking program that activates Town Center, supports small businesses, and enhances Town Center visitor experience.
2. Ensure Island residents have priority access to public transportation.
3. Determine if on-site commercial and multi-family residential parking is adequately utilized. Identify options for increasing and/or regulating its use.





## Draft Structure

- A. Project Overview
- B. Parking Inventory and Utilization
- C. Community Engagement Activities
- D. Strategy Recommendations
- E. Implementation
- F. Appendices

# Public Comment Period Overview

- Comment period opened July 31-September 19
- Draft available for review at: <https://letstalk.mercergov.org/tc-parking-study>
- Three ways to comment:
  1. Let's Talk – 726 page views, 409 downloads, 8 unique comments
  2. E-mail – 13 unique comments (1 local business owner, 2 on behalf of Neighbors in Motion)
  3. Public Hearing – 1 unique comment (TC resident)
- Promoted through MI Weekly, *Mercer Island Reporter*, direct outreach to businesses, and Chamber of Commerce.
- Matrix of all comments provided as Exhibit 4.

[We want to hear from you! Provide comments on the preliminary Town Center Parking Study Report.](#)

2 months ago 8 Responses

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [e](#)

The public comment period for the Town Center Parking Study has concluded. Feedback received will be discussed by the City Council on October 17. Stay tuned to Let's Talk for more details!

The preliminary Town Center Parking Study Report is available for community review and comment through September 19.

[Click to download the report preliminary draft.](#)

After you review the report, share your feedback in a few ways:

1. Post your comments in this forum using the comment box below.
2. E-mail your comments directly to Sarah Bluvus, CIP Project Manager, at [sarah.bluvus@mercerisland.gov](mailto:sarah.bluvus@mercerisland.gov).
3. Participate in the Public Hearing scheduled for September 19, 2023. (More details coming soon.)

Your comments will inform the process to adopt the final report by the end of 2023. Thank you for sharing your feedback, and stay tuned for more information about next steps, which will be shared on Let's Talk when available.


[GO TO DISCUSSION](#)

# Public Comment Themes / Highlights

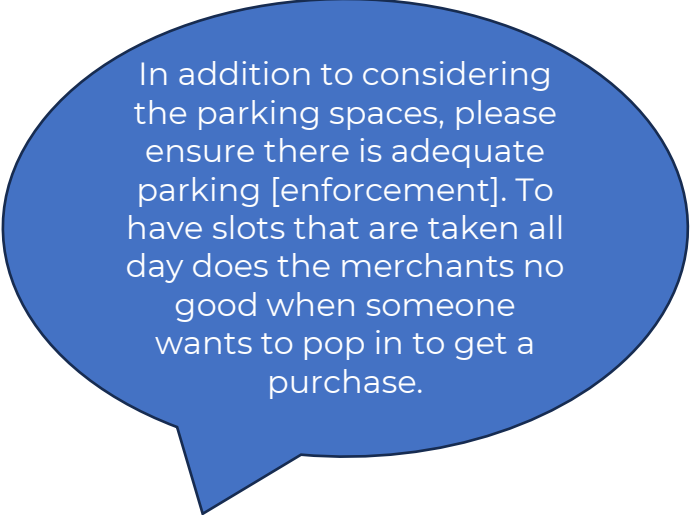
- Comments on all but Recommendation 1d.
- Strategy #3 received the most comments.
- Request to add images to plan to demonstrate current conditions. Staff agreed this was useful; a new **Appendix E** (Exhibit 2) will be adopted with the final document.

## Major Themes

1. Emphasis on bike safety and infrastructure (11 respondents)
2. Need to support local retail environment through parking improvements (9 respondents)
3. Continued desire for “park once” strategies (5 respondents)
4. Parking enforcement still necessary (3 respondents)



I agree with most of the report findings to include better bicycle accessibility. My best shopping experiences have generally been when I travelled by bike.



In addition to considering the parking spaces, please ensure there is adequate parking [enforcement]. To have slots that are taken all day does the merchants no good when someone wants to pop in to get a purchase.

# Early Actions Update

## Parking Counts

- Analyzed 2023 data and added as **Appendix F** (Exhibit 3) to Town Center Parking Plan.
- Plan to schedule 2024 counts to take place earlier in May.

## Wayfinding Tools

- Began distributing new parking maps; GIS creating digital map to launch in Q1 2024.
- New “**P**” parking signs will be installed near parking garages by end of 2023.

## Parking Citation Fees

- Working with City Attorney’s Office to propose new fees to City Council in early 2024.

## PUBLIC PARKING GARAGES MERCER ISLAND TOWN CENTER

The parking garages highlighted on this map provide free public parking in the Town Center. It is intended as a guide only and does not guarantee parking availability, time limits, or enforcement rules. Please check the posted signage when parking at any garage.



PUBLIC PARKING TIME LIMITS:   2 HOURS   3 HOURS

Disclaimer: No warranties of any sort including accuracy, fitness or merchantability accompany this map. Aerial photo: 2019



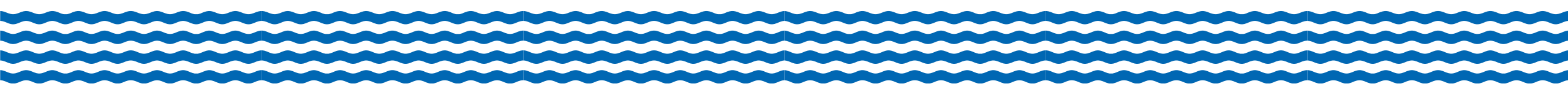


# Discussion Items



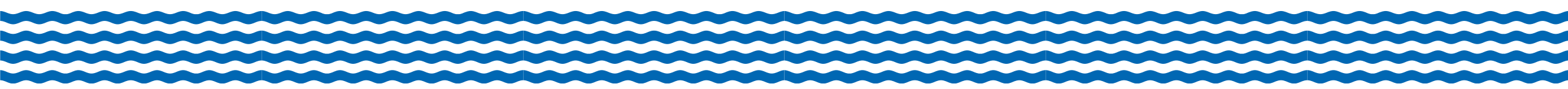
## Is it a “plan” or a “study?”

- The name “Town Center Parking Study” has carried through from the time this was added to our work plan.
- When the document is presented for final adoption, we will change the name to “Town Center Parking Plan.”



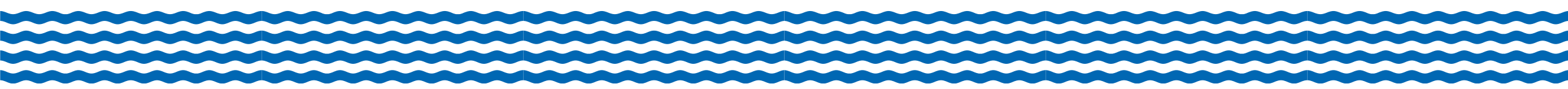
# Item #1 – On-Street Parking Time Limits

- Recommendation 1a.
- Recommendation is to make on-street parking time limits consistent across Town Center.
- Two-hour time limit advised as best option for encouraging turnover for high-value, on-street spaces.
- **Staff recommendation:** No change to plan; Council to evaluate future policy approach and time limits as part of 2024 work plan.



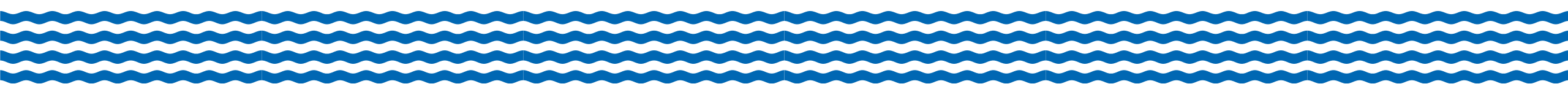
## Item #2 – MICC Street Design Standards

- Recommendation 3d.
- Recommendation is to explore street reconfigurations and identifies SE 27<sup>th</sup> Street and 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE as good candidates.
- MICC 19.11.220 calls for 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE to be redesigned with parking on both sides of street and sharrows.
- If an alternate design were explored/preferred, MICC would be updated to ensure alignment.
- **Staff recommendation:** Noted for awareness only.

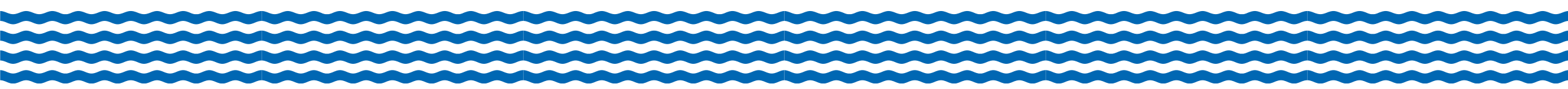


## Item #3 – Ramp Up Parking Enforcement Efforts

- Recommendation 1e.
- Process to update parking citation fees underway and planned for completion in early 2024.
- Staff also support deploying parking management platform (e.g. PayByPhone app) for on-street parking.
- **Staff recommendation:** Complete update to parking citation fees and implement parking management platform before undertaking additional enforcement work.

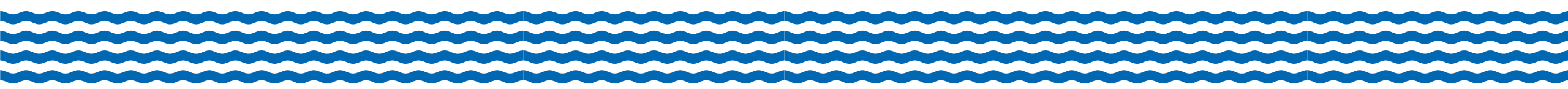


## Item #4 – Eliminate Commuter Parking Options

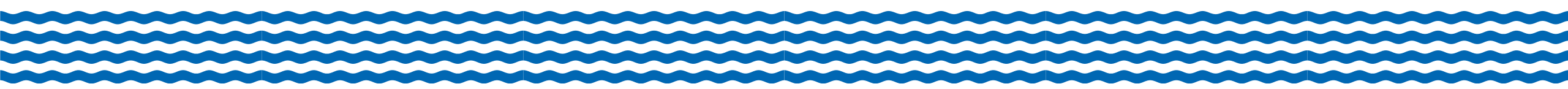
- Recommendation 1b.
  - Includes action to suspend the Town Center Parking permit program if the Park & Ride continues to show less than 75% occupancy.
  - 2023 data showed that Park & Ride never reached 75% occupancy (highest occupancy was 67% at 12pm on weekday).
  - **Staff recommendation:** Complete other actions (including collection of 2024 data) before fully eliminating the Town Center Parking permit program.
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# Item #5 – Increase Signage for Off-Street Parking Options

- Recommendation 2a.
- Staff working to increase signage for public parking garages.
- Additional “**P**” parking signs will be installed in City ROW locations by end of 2023.
- If Council desires to pursue other specific actions, these items will need to be added to the work plan and resources identified to complete that work.
- **Staff recommendation:** None.



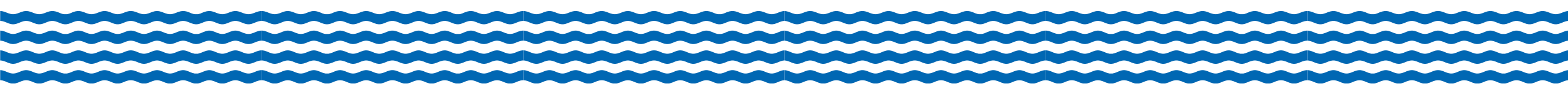
# Item #6 – Audit Compliance with Current Off-Street Parking Requirements

- Recommendation 2b.
  - Shared parking agreements associated with Town Center parking garages preliminarily reviewed as part of Study.
  - CPD conducts periodic review of on-site parking requirements when permit applications received for new/changing uses at existing facilities.
  - Staff are not currently conducting annual audits of all parking garages.
  - If Council desires additional audits, this item would need to be added to the work plan and resources identified.
  - **Staff recommendation:** None.
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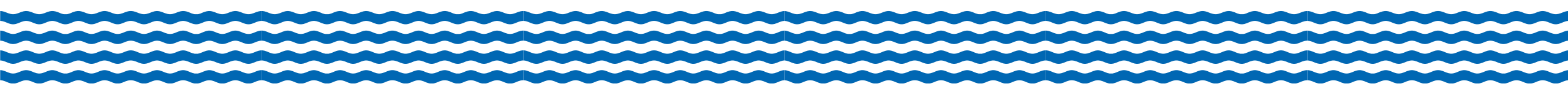
# Item #7 – Force Island Square to Eliminate Use of Parking App

- Recommendation 2b.
- Island Square (2758 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE) currently provides 40+ public parking spaces available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Property's use of a parking application does not violate this availability – spaces are free for first two hours but require payment if use extends beyond initial two hours.
- **Staff recommendation:** None.

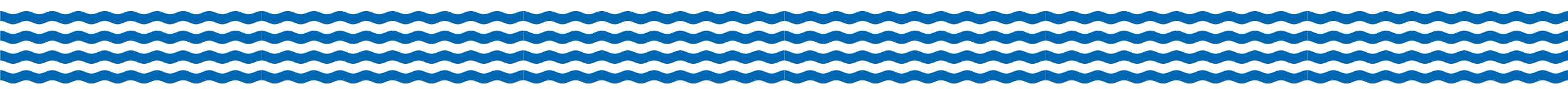


# Item #8 – Initiate Study of Parking Designs for 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and SE 27<sup>th</sup> Street

- Recommendation 3d.
- Two capital projects related to these streets slated for 2023-2028 CIP:
  - SE 27<sup>th</sup> Street Overlay (SP0110) – Scheduled for completion by Q4 2024.
  - 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE Channelization Upgrades (SP0136) – Scheduled for completion in 2026.
- If Council desires to move forward with study of on-street parking designs, these projects will need to be suspended while that analysis is completed.
- **Staff recommendation:** Suspend capital projects if City Council desires to study Parking Alternatives for 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and SE 27<sup>th</sup> Street.



## Item #9 – Implement a parking management application to include allowance for short-term/free parking.

- Recommendations 1a and 1f.
  - Staff support implementing a parking management platform (e.g. PayByPhone app) for on-street parking.
  - Requiring payment for on-street parking is a policy decision that needs further discussion by/direction from the Council.
  - **Staff recommendation:** Complete update to parking citation fees and implement parking management platform. Council to evaluate future policy approach and time limits as part of 2024 work plan.
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Other questions/final revisions?



# Recommended Motion

- Direct staff to finalize the Plan for adoption.
- Set adoption for November 21, 2023, on Consent Agenda.

